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# HENRY St. GEORGE TUCKER

Missionary  
& Bishop

A. Pierce Middleton

日本聖公會

HENRY ST. GEORGE TUCKER: MISSIONARY & BISHOP  
BY A. PIERCE MIDDLETON

*This pamphlet is one of a series of biographies of Pioneer Builders in the Church's work edited by THE REV. POWEL MILLS DAWLEY, PH.D. Each pamphlet presents a glimpse into the life and work of a Christian who has responded to the call of a missionary vocation in some pioneer area of the Church's task. The series covers a wide range of people, times and places, and each is written by an author whose interests, background or experience are peculiarly suited to the writing of the pamphlet. The general editor, Dr. Dawley, is Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the General Theological Seminary, and author of two volumes in the CHURCH'S TEACHING SERIES, Chapters in Church History and The Episcopal Church and Its Work.*

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HENRY ST. GEORGE TUCKER

*From a portrait by Mary Arnold Nash*



## Prayers

**O** GOD, who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are far off and to them that are nigh; Grant that all men everywhere may seek after thee and find thee. Bring the nations into thy fold, pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten thy kingdom; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

**A**LMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of consecration in the hearts of those who bear thy Gospel everywhere; Grant to us the same power of love for thee and for all men; that, as we remember their devotion, we may be stirred in behalf of thy cause; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

**O** ALMIGHTY GOD, look mercifully upon the world which thou hast redeemed by the blood of thy dear Son, and incline the hearts of many to make acceptable sacrifice for the Mission of thy Church; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Henry St. George Tucker Missionary & Bishop

*by* A. PIERCE MIDDLETON

**"P**ERHAPS THE GREATEST LESSON FOR THE missionary to learn is that while we human agents plant and water, it is God that giveth the increase." Hence, the coming of a time when the foreign missionary can be eliminated "is a proof that his function has in a degree been faithfully performed." So wrote Bishop Tucker in 1951, and these words not only give a clue to his character, but also conveniently summarize his long career as a missionary.

At the turn of the century, when Tucker went to Japan as a young priest just out of seminary, the missionary work of the Church was in the hands of men who, for the most part, distrusted the capacity of the native clergy and felt obliged to hold the reins themselves in matters of policy and administration. The first two decades of the twentieth century witnessed a change in this view and saw the transfer of administrative power to a native episcopate. Foremost among the younger missionaries advocating this change was Henry St. George Tucker.

#### PREPARATION IN VIRGINIA

THIS scion of an old Virginia family was descended from his famous namesake, St. George Tucker, who came as a student to the College of William and Mary from his native Bermuda in 1772. He identified himself with the American cause, and served under Washington in the Revolution. After the war, he settled in Williamsburg, where his handsome house is still occupied by his descendants, and became the second professor of law at the College, a distinguished judge, and acquired the epithet "the American Blackstone" for his legal studies and a five-volume annotated edition (1803) of the famous *Commentaries*. Through his mother, Maria Washington, Henry St. George was connected with the Father of his Country; she was a daughter of Lt. Col. John Augustine Washington III, great nephew of the first President, and last private owner of Mount Vernon.

Tucker's father, Beverley Dandridge Tucker, was the rector of Lunenburg Parish, Richmond County, in the Northern Neck of Virginia, when Henry St. George was born in 1874. Eight years later the father became rector of St. Paul's Parish, Norfolk, and in 1906 was consecrated Bishop Coadjutor of Southern Virginia, serving as bishop of the diocese from 1918 to 1930.

Young Tucker was educated at the Norfolk Academy and the University of Virginia, being graduated from the latter in 1895 with a B.A. and M.A., which, he said, gave him great confidence in facing the world, and appeared to him then as "a sword capable of opening any oyster." For awhile he taught school and dallied with the idea of other professions, including

civil engineering, but the spiritual atmosphere of the home in which he had been reared proved, at length, to be the determining influence in his choice of a life's work. Although his parents never suggested the ministry to him, their unselfconscious example of a life of devotion to Christ and His Church led him to recognize the priesthood as the only possible path for him to pursue.

In retrospect, he wrote that "God's call is mediated in various ways. If, when it comes, we are not disobedient to the heavenly voice, we are apt to forget that the credit for our response belongs partly to influences of which we may have been unconscious, but which become a part of that mysterious process by which our character is moulded and our will guided without having its freedom destroyed."

In 1897 he entered the Virginia Theological Seminary as a candidate for Holy Orders from the Diocese of Southern Virginia. Many of its professors were elderly and employed rather archaic teaching methods, but these handicaps by no means obscured the celebrated evangelical fervor that characterizes the Seminary, and Tucker acquired an elevated conception of the spiritual character of the priesthood while he was there. Indeed, it was as a student at Virginia Seminary that he was first touched by the missionary zeal for which it is famous, and decided to offer himself for service in Japan. In 1899 he was sent as one of the Seminary's two student representatives to a missionary convention at the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Massachusetts, which served to awaken in him a personal interest in the Church's overseas missionary work.



A short time later, in the course of a discussion at supper, he unguardedly expressed his willingness to enter the mission field if the Board of Missions would have him. The Dean, who happened to be at the table, overheard him, and drew from his pocket a letter from Bishop McKim of Japan asking for an additional missionary priest. That night Tucker decided to go. He knew little or nothing of Japan and had no particular interest in that country, but he was confronted with an emergency call from the Church, and for him there was nothing to do but accept.

In later years Bishop Tucker looked with affection upon the Seminary, declaring that no amount of learning could make up for the good things he received there. His mortal remains were interred in August, 1959, in the burying ground of the Seminary he loved so well and to which he acknowledged a debt of gratitude he could never adequately repay.

#### YOUNG TUCKER IN JAPAN

TUCKER arrived at Yokohama Harbor after a long sea voyage which included a bout with a typhoon. His introduction to the Land of the Rising Sun was an inspiring view, through his cabin porthole, of Mount Fuji just as the sun rose. The beauty of it haunted him, and he later did a great deal of mountain-climbing, ascending Fujiyama no fewer than a dozen times.

In Tokyo, he set to work at once learning the language, which took a year. On the side, he taught a class in New Testament Greek in the Divinity School, and took his turn at the English services in the Cathedral. He also made friends with those who had served in the mission field for years. From his friend-

ship with Theodosius Tyng, an American priest of long experience in the Orient, came an important insight into missionary policy that was to be the cornerstone of Tucker's great contribution to the Japanese Church in years to come.

"It was," to use Bishop Tucker's own words, "that the evangelization of Japan could be finally accomplished only by a Japanese Church under Japanese leadership." In other words, the main job of the American Mission was not to convert large numbers of Japanese, but rather to concentrate on the development and training of competent and qualified leaders who, in turn, would be much better able to evangelize their fellow Japanese than any number of foreign missionaries. A corollary of this was that the American Church authorities should be ready to transfer to them the responsibility for leadership as soon as they were able to exercise it. This is now recognized as an essential principle of successful missionary work, but at that time some of the older missionaries who had borne the burden and heat of the day were inclined to regard it as visionary. They hesitated to transfer their authority and power of the purse to their Japanese sons-in-Christ.

Tucker realized before some of his seniors that under native leadership the Japanese Church would have a greater incentive to raise the necessary funds for the work of the Church. The parishes in Osaka and Tokyo which were under Japanese priests were making much more rapid progress towards self-support than those under foreign priests. He concluded that a principle which worked well locally would prove equally advantageous on a diocesan level. From the



very start Tucker formulated the principles which were to govern his career in Japan. He made his chief objective the fulfillment of the conditions laid down by the General Synod of the Japanese Church in 1900 upon which an independent diocese with its own Japanese bishop could be established. It took twenty-three years, but it was accomplished. Almost the last thing Bishop Tucker did in Japan was to preside at the convention at which the Diocese of Osaka was organized and a Japanese elected its first bishop.

#### NIPPON SEI KO KAI

THE work of the Episcopal Church in Japan was begun in 1859 by another Virginian, Channing Moore Williams, who later became the first bishop there. For a long time the government was suspicious of Christianity and reluctant to permit foreign missionaries to carry on their work. Eventually, however, Japanese enthusiasm for things Western overcame their apprehension and the authorities relaxed the restrictions against them.

In 1887 the Holy Catholic Church in Japan (*Nippon Sei Ko Kai*) was organized, embracing the missionary dioceses that had been begun by the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church. Theoretically an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion, *Nippon Sei Ko Kai* was controlled by foreigners. There were then no Japanese bishops and all its dioceses depended upon funds supplied from abroad.

Chief among its agencies were its schools, its hospitals, and other humanitarian work. Church schools were particularly important and rendered a twofold

service. They opened the way for evangelical work and they provided well-trained leaders for it. In the early days of St. Paul's College, Tokyo, the teachers in nearby primary schools warned their pupils against it because it was a Christian institution. But, in time, the ability and the character of its graduates advertised the religion it represented, so that by 1900 these same schools supplied a large proportion of St. Paul's day students. By that time, also, a large number of Japanese priests and catechists had received their academic training there or at the Church of England School at Osaka.

The extent of missionary work of the Episcopal Church is small compared with that of some communions, but there is no reason why it cannot lead the way by showing the best examples of churchmanship, schools, and hospitals. If a Church school is to perform a useful function, it must be a good school, rising above the level of educational proficiency that prevails in the country where it is situated. The better non-Christian schools in Tokyo in 1900 were far ahead of St. Paul's College in buildings, equipment, and financial backing. But their accepted methods of teaching were old-fashioned by Western standards. Education was largely a matter of memory work and left little room for initiative on the part of the student. Here was an area in which St. Paul's could excel, and by maintaining a standard of instruction equal to the best of American and European institutions, it could render both Japan and the Church a great service. This it conscientiously sought to do.

Next to schools, philanthropic work was regarded as the most effective means of breaking down prejudice



and arousing sympathetic interest in the faith of Christ. Hospitals, by their day-to-day works of mercy, reached larger numbers of people than could be reached by direct evangelism. A prominent non-Christian Japanese once told Bishop Tucker, "Your St. Luke's Hospital is the most eloquent and widely heard preacher you have in Japan."

An embroidery school established at Kanazawa, where working conditions of the women employed in silk manufacture were extremely bad, called attention to the unsatisfactory conditions and illustrated on a small scale how they could be improved. A small leper hospital operated by the Church afforded such relief that the Japanese government took note and eventually established a series of well-equipped leper institutions in various parts of the country. In just such ways the social reforms which have done so much for the betterment of life in modern Japan were due largely to the example set by small Christian institutions.

But schools and works of mercy created a special problem in Japan. The innate courtesy of the people and their extraordinary capacity for gratitude led them to do almost anything, even to accepting baptism, in order to show their appreciation and make themselves agreeable to their benefactors. As a result, the Church became extremely suspicious of sudden conversions and was reluctant to baptize catechumens until convinced of the genuineness of their faith.

Bishop Tucker's first encounter with the problem of polite insincerity was in his Japanese tutor. A year younger than his pupil, the tutor would not presume to open a conversation or criticize his student's work. Tucker had to ask all the questions, and he failed to

persuade his polite tutor to admit that his Japanese was anything short of perfection. Eventually, Tucker learned that when the tutor was extravagantly laudatory it was a sign that the student had made a particularly egregious error. Bishop Tucker later reflected that this proved the truth of the Scriptural injunction: *Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you.*

Later, when he was engaged in evangelistic work in the north, he saw a man suddenly develop an intense interest in the Church. Tucker was a little suspicious, but bided his time. A few months later the man asked for a job in St. Luke's Hospital for which he was not in the least qualified. Tucker explained kindly what would be necessary in the way of training before he could recommend him for the job. This disappointment burst the bubble of the man's piety; he went away indignant, and neither the Church nor Bishop Tucker saw him again.

In the winter of 1902-03, Tucker spent most of his time in famine relief, distributing rice imported from Saigon at the expense of the foreign communities of Yokohama and Kobe. This labor of love aroused a real feeling of gratitude to the Church and opened a door of opportunity for Christian evangelism. A Japanese catechist later told Bishop Tucker that he once talked to a man in one of the villages about Christ, who said, "O yes, I have already met him when he came to my village bringing rice." This unintentional irreverence was cited by Bishop Tucker as an example of the impression made by the Christian charity of the Yokohama and Kobe people. It also was an example of the ever-present danger of making "rice" Christians.



Another pitfall of the foreign missionary was the temptation, especially when dealing with unsophisticated catechumens, to water down the doctrinal content of the faith, and to allow the exacting demands of their work serve as an excuse for giving up systematic theological study. When Tucker became a bishop he urged careful orthodoxy and regular reading upon his priests, telling them that although the witness of their lives and good works might be an effective argument for the Church, "it is not enough to make Christianity ethically fine but theologically shallow."

#### ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE, 1903-1911

AFTER two years as a missionary priest at Sendai and Hirosaki during which he experienced the rigors of a northern Japanese winter, and narrowly escaped drowning when overtaken by a tidal wave while swimming in the sea, St. George Tucker was summoned to Tokyo by the Bishop and appointed President of St. Paul's College.

This celebrated institution had been founded in 1873 by the Rt. Rev. Channing Moore Williams and had only five students when it opened its doors. By 1903 it had 513 students and a fine corps of teachers, and was recognized as one of the better schools in Tokyo. During his eight-year presidency, Tucker worked hand-in-glove with the principal, Dr. J. S. Motoda, a Japanese priest, who interpreted and secured Japanese assent to their joint planning, while Tucker interpreted it to the Bishop and the American Board of Missions. He allowed Dr. Motoda, whose ability and experience he valued, to be the responsible

head of the college. This was the first step in the change in policy he sought to bring about: the gradual transfer of responsibility from foreign worker to the Japanese.

Japanese law forbade compulsory religious classes and services in schools operated under government license, but it allowed them on a voluntary basis. Therefore, voluntary religious instruction was offered during the noon recess. Tucker felt that since attendance represented the sacrifice of half the midday recreation hour, one could be sure that those who came regularly were really interested, although some might drop in sporadically with the idea that by so doing they would win the good will of the teachers. This danger was lessened when care was taken to avoid any semblance of partiality to students who showed an interest in Christianity. "In the interest of sound evangelism," Tucker said, "the teachers refrained from bringing pressure to bear upon the students to become candidates for baptism. While this might have been the easiest way to produce converts, the result would have been a harvest of 'rice' Christians."

One of the major events in Tucker's administration was moving the college to a better location and erecting new buildings. While in the United States on furlough in 1911, he visited the famous architect, Ralph Adams Cram. Mr. Cram generously offered to draw the plans for the new buildings without charge, provided he might do them in a Japanese style. Tucker readily agreed and was delighted with the results, but his Japanese colleagues rejected them scornfully, saying that they resembled old feudal prisons. The truth was that the Japanese ardently desired



Western architecture, and so the new St. Paul's arose in something akin to American collegiate Gothic.

As President of St. Paul's College, Tucker lived alone and employed a Japanese named Hirai and his wife. They worked for him for many years and relieved him of all concern about domestic affairs. The ways of the East, however, are often different from the ways of the West, and Tucker enjoyed sharing with his friends some of the amusing incidents that occurred.

On one occasion when I had a dinner party for Bishop and Mrs. McKim and a few other fashionable guests, I noticed Mrs. McKim examining the china with a good deal of interest. Later I discovered that Hirai, thinking that my tableware was not quite good enough for such distinguished guests, borrowed from the McKim cook her best set of china, which she used only on rare occasions. Fortunately she had a kind heart and a sense of humor.

#### BISHOP OF KYOTO, 1912-1923

THE year 1911 was a notable one for St. George Tucker: he married in the spring and was elected bishop in the fall. "Both of these events," he humorously noted in his reminiscences, "took me rather by surprise."

Mrs. Tucker, the former Lillian Warnock, was also a missionary in Japan. She and St. George had met in Tokyo and were drawn together by a common interest in mountain-climbing. When he found his "bachelor status crumbling," as he put it, he felt obliged to inform his family at home. He considered his engagement the "greatest triumph of my career," but all he could tell his family about Miss Warnock's pre-Japanese history was that her father and five

uncles had fought in the Confederate Army. That, he was sure, was enough to secure their entire approval.

While on furlough that fall, Tucker attended the annual meeting of the Woman's Auxiliary of Southern Virginia. Just before he arose to speak about missionary work in Japan, he was handed a telegram notifying him of his election as Bishop of Kyoto. Although this came as a bolt out of the blue, he decided to accept it because it would enable him to further the missionary strategy which underlay his career. By stepping down from the presidency of St. Paul's College, he might open the way for his respected colleague, Dr. Motoda, to succeed him. The bishopric would give him an opportunity for independent leadership in promoting the policy of self-government which he considered essential to the development of the Japanese Church. He was, accordingly, consecrated in Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kyoto, on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1912.

The Missionary Diocese of Kyoto had about fifty churches and mission stations with some 2,200 communicants and slightly less than five thousand baptized persons in a district with a total population of eight million. The new bishop perceived that the evangelistic opportunities were unlimited, but the laborers were few. He had four foreign priests and thirteen Japanese priests, who were fully occupied with work in the larger towns. He had to rely on catechists in the smaller places, some of whom, though enthusiastic evangelists, were lacking in ability and training. In consequence, he concluded that the bishop himself would have to be the chief evangelist, and he threw himself into an incredible schedule of travel to remote



missions, preaching and teaching, baptizing and confirming, and addressing non-Christian groups.

Although these experiences were agreeable and exhilarating, they confirmed his earlier conviction that priority must be given to the training of a Japanese priesthood. Only the fringe of the population had been touched by Christian influence, yet everywhere people were receptive to the Gospel. "I see indications," Tucker wrote, "that the nation as a whole is, through a variety of causes, being brought to a state of mind favorable to the reception of Christianity. Our present responsibility is to train and develop the Church so that it will be prepared to enter upon its task of interpreting Christianity to the nation at the psychological moment."

The fulfillment of this hope was, of course, greatly postponed by the intervention of militarism and by two world wars, the second of which deprived the Japanese Church of most of its material resources. On the eve of World War II the Japanese government enacted a law requiring that all foreign clergy be withdrawn from the country and that all foreign financial aid to Christian Churches in Japan cease immediately. The policy of fostering a native episcopate, so long advocated by Bishop Tucker, proved its worth, for, in the words of Canon DeMille, "Fortunately, the continuous effort made since 1900 by the American Episcopal Church to develop native leadership and support in all her foreign mission work had laid foundations capable of withstanding this storm."<sup>1</sup> *Nippon Sei Ko Kai* survived.

<sup>1</sup> George E. DeMille, *The Episcopal Church Since 1900* (New York. Morehouse-Barlow, 1955) p. 170.

"The miracle of the Cross," Bishop Tucker wrote in 1951, "has been repeated and God has transmuted the apparent triumph of evil into a new opportunity. Postwar Japan presents to us the anticipated moment when the nation as a whole is favorable to the reception of Christianity."

World War I provided Bishop Tucker with an opportunity for work with refugees. At the request of the Red Cross, he went to Vladivostok in 1918 to investigate and draw plans for dealing with the refugee situation in Eastern Siberia. Considerable numbers of people fleeing from the ravages of the Bolsheviks were pouring into the area. In addition, some ten thousand Czech soldiers, who had been captured while fighting in the Austrian army against Russia, had been transported there as prisoners of war, but in the confusion of the Tsar's fall they had obtained arms and taken control of Vladivostok.

Despite the disorganized state of affairs, a 200-bed hospital was set up in Vladivostok, and another at Harbin. Bishop Tucker found that a supply of winter clothing for soldiers and civilian refugees was the next most urgent need in an area where the temperature drops to 50° below zero. After many delays and much red tape in Washington, the Red Cross secured the needed clothing, arranged for its transportation across the Pacific, and delivered it to the refugees.

#### VIRGINIA AGAIN

IN 1922 Bishop Tucker decided to resign his see and return to America. His reasons were partly the poor health of his children and partly his belief that the diocese was ready to become financially independent



and able to support a Japanese bishop. "I shall be leaving a body of Japanese clergy," he wrote his father, "most of whom I have trained myself . . . [and] I am confident of their ability to carry on the work."

A month before his departure from Japan, he received notice of his election as Bishop of Michigan. He declined it on the grounds that, since his entire ministry had been in Japan, he felt unqualified. Instead, he accepted appointment as Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Virginia Seminary, believing that his experience in the foreign mission field ought to be made available to young priests in the making.

Tucker's sojourn on the Seminary faculty was short. Others did not agree that he was unqualified for an American diocese, and in 1926 he was elected Bishop Coadjutor of Virginia. The next year he succeeded as eighth bishop of the diocese.

This work was congenial to him, for he loved his native State and rejoiced in its people. Following, to some degree, his Kyoto practice, he tried to be not only bishop but also chief evangelist of the diocese. He was equally at home in the mansions of the Tidewater and in the humble homes of the mountain folk. A group of the latter who were accustomed to Bishop Tucker's lean, lank frame and rugged "early American" features were disappointed when another bishop arrived for confirmation. They wanted to know what had become of the bishop "who looks like us."

This happy and relatively carefree pastoral episcopate was soon complicated by Bishop Tucker's call to higher office and greater responsibilities. In 1937, to his great surprise, he was elected to succeed the retiring Presiding Bishop, James DeWolf Perry.

#### PRESIDING BISHOP: 1938-1946

THE General Convention of 1937, meeting at Cincinnati, was a notable one, for it made important changes in the administrative machinery of the Church. It abolished the six-year term of the Presiding Bishop, making the office a life appointment, subject to retirement on account of age, and conferred on him much greater executive powers than ever before.

The story is told that the House of Bishops had reached a deadlock in deciding between the leading candidates. Although Bishop Tucker's name was not included in the list of nominees, someone proposed his name in order to break the impasse. He at once struggled to his feet to decline, but Bishop Sherrill, who was sitting by him, took hold of his coat to keep him from getting to his feet. By the time he was free, he had been elected. When the news reached the House of Deputies there was an unprecedented demonstration of enthusiasm for the choice.

In view of the greatly increased power that the Convention had just given the Presiding Bishop, it seemed obvious that the man they wanted for the office was the one least likely to exercise it with arrogance. "Unquestionably," said an observer, "they were looking for the most spiritual, sweet, and Christian character they could find." They found him in the person of Henry St. George Tucker.

The new Presiding Bishop took up his duties on January 1, 1938, with calmness, dignity, poise, and a sense of humor. He was not a driving executive, but he was a shrewd and capable leader. For all his gentleness, he gave a firm and consistent leadership to the Church in the troublous times in which he served. De-



pression and war were the order of the day; yet despite a seriously reduced budget he launched the National Council on a program of greater effectiveness.

A colleague who served with him, and wrote a profile of him when he retired, admitted that at times some of the officials of the National Council were restless because Bishop Tucker "was not always excited about some immediate problem, and even seemed over-casual about conferences or promotional schemes that were the darlings of our hearts." But, he added, we "always realized that he was a truly religious statesman. . . . He knew that the immediate was only important in so far as it affected the future. . . . Our smaller subordinate minds did not always agree, but looking back I can say it was good for us to be with one who was much nearer the eternal than the ephemeral."

The world of newspapers, radio, layouts, and reporters was new to him. But he successfully came to grips with it, realizing that, whether one liked it or not, the Church was in competition with the world. And so, Bishop Tucker played the game, and emerged as a great spiritual leader with a penetrating understanding of world affairs and a passionate zeal for the ecumenical movement.

On a national level, too, he transcended regionalism and differences of churchmanship, inspiring confidence and trust on all sides. Intuitively, yet without guile, he seemed to sense other people's needs, and they in turn sensed his consecrated attitude.

Coming from an evangelical background and lacking the advantages of proper liturgical instruction at seminary, Bishop Tucker was known to be "strong on

theology and light on ceremonial." At a consecration—and he presided over some fifty-five of them—he entered, often enough, in a crumpled rochet and black chimere all askew, following co-consecrators elegantly attired in brocaded copes and mitres. Yet he appreciated the genuineness of good ceremonial, whether simple or elaborate, as a means of giving expression to the Catholic faith. While attending a particularly ornate service he startled everyone by a profound bow at the "And was made man" in the Nicene Creed. Some thought he had been taken ill, but he confessed afterwards that he had been so impressed by the worshipfulness of the ceremonial that he found himself sharing naturally in its reverence.

The dislike of authoritarianism which underlay Bishop Tucker's career in foreign missions also manifested itself in his new office. In the emergencies that resulted from Pearl Harbor, the Presiding Bishop generally refused to rely upon the increased power given him by the Convention of 1937, and preferred to consult the other officers of the National Council, whom he called his "cabinet." Democracy, he believed, rested upon the assumption that no one, no matter how great and wise, can always make right decisions. Bishop Tucker chose to exercise his office as Presiding Bishop in accordance with this principle.

His modest and unassuming character while occupying the Church's highest office is revealed in an incident told by the late Charles W. Sheerin, who served under him as Vice-President of the National Council. Bishop Tucker's telephone rang one day; and he said: "No, I am sorry, but I have to preach the commencement sermon at Sewanee that Sunday." It was Presi-



dent Roosevelt, calling to ask the Bishop to preach at Hyde Park when the King and Queen of Great Britain came in June. Sheerin told the Vice-Chancellor of Sewanee, secured a change of date, and arranged for Bishop Tucker to accept President Roosevelt's invitation. "Few men," observed Sheerin, "would have hesitated in the first place, but Bishop Tucker had given his word to somebody, and he intended to keep it."

It was Bishop Tucker's task to serve in Japan when the old order of American missionary policy was changing; it was, likewise, his task to be Presiding Bishop of the American Church when its national administration was undergoing considerable change. By his nature and his ability he was admirably equipped to superintend the change. The most fitting encomium ever given him was the remark of a colleague upon his retirement that "In a changing age [Bishop Tucker] seemed to preserve the best of the past, and yet was not afraid to adventure with the new."

## For Further Reading

*The History of the Episcopal Church in Japan* by Henry St. G. Tucker (New York: Scribners, 1938).

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